GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:130
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2006
IBSA SUMMIT
Kaushal Shri Raghuvir Singh;Scindia Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a declaration for mutual cooperation in various fields between India, Brazil and South Africa was signed at the first ever IBSA Summit held in Brasilia in September this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the objectives to be achieved thereby; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in pursuance thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) Yes.

(b) A copy of the Joint Declaration that was adopted by the 1st IBSA Summit is enclosed as an annexure.

(c) The objective is to achieve closer coordination on global issues, enhance trilateral cooperation in sectoral areas and strengthen South-South cooperation.

(d) Cooperation in information technology, trade facilitation, public administration, agriculture, bio-fuels and merchant shipping is envisaged.

Annexure referred to in reply to part (b) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question no. 130 regarding 'IBSA SUMMIT' for answer on 22.11.2006

1st IBSA SUMMIT MEETING

Joint Declaration

1. The Prime Minister of India, H.E. Manmohan Singh, the President of Brazil, H.E. Luiz InÃ¡cio Lula da Silva, and the President of South Africa, H.E. Thabo Mbeki, met in BrasÃlia on 13 September 2006, for the 1st Summit Meeting of the India- Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA).

2. Created in 2003, the IBSA Dialogue Forum plays an increasingly important role in the foreign policies of India, Brazil and South Africa. It has become instrumental for promoting ever closer coordination on global issues between three large multicultural and multiracial democracies of Asia, South America and Africa, and contributed to enhancing trilateral India-Brazil-South Africa cooperation in sectoral areas.

3. The importance of the IBSA Dialogue Forum goes beyond its positive impact on India-Brazil-South Africa relations. The Forum, consisting of three large developing countries, provides a framework that will give additional impetus to further contacts between Asian, South American and African developing countries, thus contributing to strengthening South-South cooperation.

4. The Heads of State and Government had already met under the IBSA format in previous opportunities, such as the meetings in 2003 and 2005, in New York. Ministerial meetings of the Trilateral Commission were held in New Delhi, in 2004, Cape Town, in 2005, and Rio de Janeiro, in March 2006. Trilateral working groups were created in the areas of Agriculture, Culture, Defense, Education, Energy, Health, Information Society, Trade and Investment, Social Issues, Science and Technology, Tourism and Transportation.

5. The Heads of State and Government of India, Brazil and South Africa expressed their deep appreciation with the consolidation of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. The 1st IBSA Summit, held today in BrasÃlia, reaffirms that the three countries are committed to further strengthening this innovative initiative. The Heads of State and Government decided to give utmost priority to achieving further progress in the IBSA Dialogue Forum, building on the work of previous ministerial meetings of the Trilateral Commission and working group meetings.

6. The Heads of State and Government highlighted their shared vision that participation of their societies in this diplomatic initiative

must play a key role in the future of IBSA. Therefore, they noted with deep satisfaction the Business and Academic Seminars held in BrasÃlia on 12 September 2006. Prime Minister Singh, President Lula and President Mbeko urged civil societies in India, Brazil and South Africa to enhance mutual contact and cooperation. They instructed their Governments to support initiatives with that purpose. In this regard, they also welcomed the launching of the IBSA Website, as an additional and useful tool for further promoting the IBSA Dialogue Forum with stakeholders in India, Brazil and South Africa

POLITICAL CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION ON GLOBAL ISSUES

7. The Prime Minister of India, the President of Brazil and the President of South Africa reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion of peace, security and sustainable economic and social development in the world and in their respective regions. They reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and the pre-eminent role of the United Nations. India, Brazil and South Africa will continue to work together to strengthen the multilateral system, particularly through institutions such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, in order to further promote this goal. In that spirit, the Heads of State and Government of India, Brazil and South Africa discussed relevant global challenges before the international community, particularly the reform of the United Nations and of the United Nations Security Council, the successful conclusion of the Doha Round in the WTO, with the development dimension at the core of its outcome, environmental issues, in particular improved access to renewable energy technologies, and the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, especially the rights of countries of origin over their own genetic resources as well as the protection of associated traditional knowledge.

8. The Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the pragmatic approach shared by India, Brazil and South Africa in the discussion of global issues. They also noted that common approaches by India, Brazil and South Africa strengthens the voice of developing countries and their capacity to contribute to global decisions that impact on their populations. The IBSA Forum contributes, therefore, to the goal of a fair and equitable world order.

9. In this regard, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their support for the joint proposals made by Brazil, China, India, Mexico, the Republic of Congo and South Africa in the Position Paper released on the occasion of the recent G-8 Summit meeting in Russia. This Position Paper addressed a number of challenges in the areas of energy, education and infectious diseases, among other topics. It reaffirmed the Outreach Partners' commitment to work with G-8 member states to address matters of mutual concern. It highlighted the importance of mobilizing financial resources for development, through innovative mechanisms supplementing the commitments made at the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development; emphasized the need to follow up on the work program on Africa launched at the G-8 Summit Meeting at Gleneagles, United Kingdom, in 2005; reiterated the significance of technological cooperation in energy research and development, called for improved access to renewable energy technologies, and underscored the pledge to work with developed and developing countries in sharing knowledge and expertise for development of such technologies; called upon the international community to strengthen cooperation towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in particular MDG8 to develop global partnerships for development and further the realization of the Right to Development, and the Dakar Goals in the field of education; reiterated the need to reduce major trade barriers to facilitate access to new affordable quality vaccines, medicines, diagnostics and technology aimed at preventing and controlling infectious diseases, and underscored that the flexibilities contained in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, recognized by the Doha Ministerial Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, should be fully used to protect public health.

REFORM OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

10. The Heads of State and Government reiterated their support for the comprehensive reform of the United Nations and welcomed the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council, as well as the progress made in the areas of development and management. They reaffirmed the need for a decision regarding the expansion of the Security Council, without which no reform of the United Nations will be complete. They reiterated their conviction that the Security Council must be expanded to include developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America in both its permanent and non-permanent categories, so as to reflect contemporary realities and make it more democratic, legitimate, representative and responsive. They reaffirmed their commitment to continue to jointly pursue a decision on Security Council expansion. This commitment will be pursued on an urgent basis.

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

11. The Heads of State and Government unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They stressed that there can be no justification, whatsoever, for any act of terrorism. They shared the view that the international community must further intensify efforts and cooperation to fight this scourge.

12. The Heads of State and Government recalled that the World Summit 2005 had called upon the UN member states to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism during the 60th UN General Assembly. They called upon all member states to seriously work towards an expeditious finalization of the text for the convention.

13. The Presidents of Brazil and South Africa expressed their outrage at the barbaric terrorist attacks, carried out on 11 July 2006 in Mumbai and other parts of India. While expressing their condemnation for these acts in the strongest terms, they reiterated their deepest condolences to the victims and their families and expressed their solidarity with the Government and people of India. They called upon the international community to undertake all necessary measures to bring to justice perpetrators, collaborators and sponsors of these and other acts of terrorism, as well as those who incite the perpetrators to commit them. They reaffirmed their resolve to further intensify measures to combat the scourge of terrorism which constitutes a most serious threat to mankind and international peace and security.

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACTION AGAINST HUNGER AND POVERTY INITIATIVE

14. Progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been exceptionally slow and this can primarily be attributed to the fact that current international support for developing countries in their efforts are inadequate to meet their needs. Increasing the levels of Official Development Assistance, supporting the liberalization of trade, and the elimination, by the developed countries, of subsidies for products that are of interest to developing countries, continue to be essential goals in promoting development and fighting hunger and poverty. However, the magnitude of the challenge makes it necessary to seek additional ways for the poorest countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular MDG1 to halve by 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. In this regard, the Heads of State and Government reiterated their strong commitment to the Action Against Hunger and Poverty Initiative and, in particular, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. They reaffirmed the importance of seeking innovative financial mechanisms in order to generate supplementary income flows that are consistent and reliable. The ongoing search for innovative new sources of financing for development is critical to overcoming the financing constraints that limit progress towards the international development objectives.

15. The Presidents of South Africa and Brazil and the Prime Minister of India noted with satisfaction that progress has been made with a pilot project based on small solidarity contributions made on the purchase of air tickets, the income from which will be channeled towards creating an International Drug Purchasing Facility to respond to the challenges of AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. In a meeting held in BrasÃlia, on 6 and 7 July 2006, important advances were achieved in designing the project, which is expected to be formally launched on the occasion of the 61st United Nations General Assembly.

HUMAN RIGHTS

16. India, Brazil and South Africa, elected to the newly formed Human Rights Council, share common visions regarding the promotion and protection of human rights. This new Forum allows human rights issues to be dealt at an appropriately high level as is the case with international peace and security and development issues. This Council will benefit from coordinated contributions from India, Brazil and South Africa, with their common understanding regarding the Council's agenda and structure. The three countries share a common vision to reaffirm the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the realization and operationalization of the Right to Development and the special protection of rights of vulnerable groups.

17. India, Brazil and South Africa welcome the recent successful conclusion of negotiations, and the adoption of the draft Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, by the 8th Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Draft Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, in New York, on 25 August 2006. The three countries look forward to the entry into force of this convention and will work toward the speedy signature thereof and the ratification thereto.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18. India, Brazil and South Africa share similar views regarding the importance of achieving sustainable development, particularly through the eradication of poverty, the promotion of economic growth and the protection of the environment. In this context, the IBSA countries wish to reiterate their common commitment in working together towards the goal of ensuring that sustainable development be achieved on a global scale, particularly in the developing world.

19. The Heads of State and Government reaffirmed that the principles in the Rio Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Action, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, should continue to guide multilateral negotiations on environmental issues. In this context, they underscored the importance of addressing the challenges of climate change in an urgent manner, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol. They called upon countries that have not yet done so to ratify the Protocol and encouraged all countries that have reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol to meet their commitments and to provide support to developing countries affected by climate change, including in the area of capacity building.

20. India, Brazil and South Africa stress that a critical step in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development on a global scale is the adequate provision of financial resources and transfer of technologies at fair and affordable prices, particularly by the donor countries. In this regard, the IBSA countries urge the donor countries to meet their Official Development Assistance targets and to mobilize new and additional financial resources, as well as to foster the transfer of environmentally-sound technologies in order to fully implement the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg. In this sense, they stressed that international cooperation is a major tool for achieving the objectives set in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Action as well as in specific fora, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION

21. The Prime Minister of India and the Presidents of Brazil and South Africa reaffirmed the view that the primary focus on human development, the fight against poverty, and measures to promote a better quality of life should underpin and provide for greater guarantees for international peace and stability. They took stock of the global security situation concerning disarmament and non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

22. The leaders reiterated their commitment to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons and expressed concern over the lack of progress in realization of that goal. They emphasized that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes requiring continuous irreversible progress on both fronts, and reaffirmed, in this regard, that the objective of non-proliferation would be best served by systematic and progressive elimination of nuclear weapons in a comprehensive, universal,

non-discriminatory and verifiable manner. They recalled that similar approaches have led to the establishment of international legally binding instruments that have banned chemical and biological weapons and are contributing towards the total elimination of such weapons and reaffirmed their commitment to make efforts in the relevant multilateral fora for an universal instrument to ban nuclear weapons and to achieve their complete elimination. They emphasized the necessity to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time to eliminate nuclear weapons, to prohibit their development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and to provide for their destruction.

23. In this context, they also expressed concern over the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. They noted that several proposals had been made in the CD with regard to a program of work and reiterated their commitment to work together with all the member states to reach a consensus taking into account the concerns of all the member states. In this context, they reiterated that the Five Ambassadors proposal as revised in 2003 still remained a viable basis for reaching a consensus.

24. The Heads of State and Government underlined the need for reducing the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and expressed their support for effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

25. The leaders discussed the threat posed by non-state actors or terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons or their related materials and technologies. They reaffirmed their commitment to contribute to multilateral efforts to counter such threats and promote co-operation in this regard. They welcomed in this regard the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. They expressed their conviction that the best way to prevent non-state actors or terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons is the total elimination of such weapons.

PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

26. The Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the inalienable right of all States to the peaceful application of nuclear energy, consistent with their international legal obligations. They called for a diplomatic resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue within the context of the IAEA.

27. They took note with satisfaction of the positive continuing cooperation among their countries at the IAEA and other fora, with a view to ensuring the unimpeded growth and development of peaceful uses of atomic energy, through the supply of technology, equipment and material, under appropriate safeguards, and reaffirmed their will to intensify such cooperation.

28. The Presidents of South Africa and Brazil and the Prime Minister of India reiterated the importance of ensuring that any multilateral decisions related to the nuclear fuel cycle do not undermine the inalienable right of States to pursue nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with their international legal obligations.

29. The leaders emphasized the need to ensure the supply of safe, sustainable and non-polluting sources of energy to meet the rising global demand for energy, particularly in developing countries. In this context they agreed that nuclear energy could play an important role. They agreed to explore approaches to cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate IAEA safeguards. They further agreed that international civilian nuclear cooperation, under appropriate IAEA safeguards, amongst countries committed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives could be enhanced through acceptable forward-looking approaches, consistent with their respective national and international obligations.

LEBANON

30. India, Brazil and South Africa welcomed the adoption on August 11th of UNSC Resolution 1701, by unanimous vote. They expressed their hope that the approval of Resolution 1701 by the Lebanese Council of Ministers on August 12th and by the Israeli Cabinet on August 13th may open a promising gateway to the negotiation of a lasting, permanent and sustainable solution to the conflict. Nonetheless, they affirmed their profound consternation and deepening concern about the impact produced by the escalation of violence in the Middle East. They condemned, in the most vehement terms, the excessive and sometimes indiscriminate use of force that resulted in the death of a large number of civilians, including women and children, and in the destruction of infrastructure in Lebanon, in flagrant violation of the principles of International Humanitarian Law. They also expressed their willingness to work in partnership with the international community to provide immediate humanitarian relief to the people of Lebanon and to undertake joint efforts in order to support the reconstruction of the Lebanese infrastructure. They called for the full implementation of all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. They stressed that the international community must act decisively to prevent the renewal of hostilities and underlined the need for a quick resumption of dialogue for resolution of all outstanding issues. They underlined that enduring regional security and stability will only be achieved through a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its dimensions, as early as possible.

ISRAEL-PALESTINE

31. The Heads of State and Government expressed serious concern about the spiral of violence which is taking place in the Palestinian Occupied Territories and reaffirmed the hope that the Palestinian National Authority and the Israeli government may hold direct talks with a view to resuming, as soon as possible, the peace negotiations as laid down by the Road Map for Peace. They reafffirmed that all efforts should be made towards the goal of an immediate end to the current violence, a resumption of security cooperation and a political engagement both among Palestinians and with Israel. They urged both parties to abstain from taking any action or measure that might put in jeopardy the peace process in the region aimed at achieving a two-state solution under the Road Map, providing for the establishment of a viable, sovereign, and independent State of Palestine, living side by side in peaceful co-existence with the State of Israel. The participants affirmed that both parties must have as a main objective the protection of civil society and the need to refrain, in any situation, from resorting to collective punishment and attacks against civilians. Deeply

concerned with the increasing deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinian population, they stressed, in particular, the importance of an immediate expansion of the temporary international mechanism for donors established under the direction of the Quartet, the Israeli compliance with the Agreement on Movement and Access of November 2005, and action on other steps to ease the humanitarian plight of the people of Gaza and the West Bank. In this context, the participants pledged their readiness to examine the launching of technical cooperation projects in Gaza and the West Bank, possibly with the use of resources from the IBSA Facility Fund.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

32. The Heads of State and Government expressed the view that the legitimacy of the IMF depends on a fundamental reform of quotas and voice that is more representative of developing countries. The reform must effectively reduce the serious imbalance between the ample majority of voting power now held by advanced economies and the unsatisfactory participation of developing countries.

DOHA ROUND

33. The Heads of State and Government deeply regretted that the WTO's Doha Development Agenda negotiations have been suspended. This is a serious setback to the development promises of the Round and a disappointment for developing countries. Failure to conclude the negotiations in accordance with the mandate will deprive developing countries of fair and equitable conditions for fully realizing their Right to Development and their comparative advantages across agriculture, industry, and services.

34. Agricultural trade and production continue to be hindered, particularly on products of export interest to developing countries, by all sorts of barriers and distortions, through a combination of non-tariff measures and high tariffs, domestic support, and export subsidies that export poverty and hunger. Such distortions should be expeditiously eliminated and agriculture should be fully incorporated into the rules of the multilateral trading system.

35. The Prime Minister of India and the Presidents of Brazil and South Africa called upon countries that have not yet done so to substantially and effectively reduce their expenditures on agricultural subsidies. It is essential that the main subsidizers improve their proposals on domestic support and their current offers on market access to provide an adequate and equitable basis for achieving the results that our countries have all agreed to strive for.

36. As members of the G-20, a grouping whose identity is deeply linked to the development dimension of the Doha Round, India, Brazil and South Africa are united around the goal of putting an end to trade distorting policies. The IBSA countries, which are also Members of the NAMA-11, are fully committed to strengthening the multilateral trading system in a more development-friendly fashion, aimed at promoting economic growth and employment and reduction of poverty.

37. India, Brazil and South Africa recalled the outcome of the G-20 High-Level Meeting held in Rio de Janeiro on 9 and 10 September 2006, and reiterated that they shall spare no effort to resume the negotiations sooner rather than later. On the road ahead, the progress achieved so far must be fully preserved. We cannot retreat. The level of ambition of the Doha Development Agenda must be maintained. The needs and aspirations of developing countries will only be met with an ambitious outcome to the Round that will reduce protectionism and end distortions.

GLOBAL SYSTEM OF TRADE PREFERENCES AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (GSTP)

38. The Heads of State and Government reiterated their commitment towards a fairer global trading system, to the benefit of developing countries. In this respect, and taking into account the spirit of the Brasilia Declaration, they welcomed the progress achieved so far in the SÃ£o Paulo Round of the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP). The GSTP has a crucial role to play in the new geography of trade, in which South-South trade is recognised as an important dynamic force. The GSTP can contribute decisively to foster new trade flows, supplement the current regional arrangements, and promote the diversification of export products and markets. The GSTP can be particularly effective in involving LDCs in the global trading system, providing them preferential access and devising other possible measures in their support. Those countries are encouraged to join the negotiations, in order to benefit to the largest extent possible from preferential access to other developing country markets.

39. The system has been strengthened by the recent application for accession by eight new participants and by the accession of Mercosur, which is about to finalize the corresponding ratification procedures and become a player in the SÃ£o Paulo Round. The IBSA Forum gives its full support to the SÃ£o Paulo Round, stressing the importance of the GSTP as an important tool to expand South-South trade flows, making world trade more inclusive and equitable.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

40. The Heads of State and Government underscored the importance of incorporating a development dimension in international discussions concerning intellectual property, as a means to make a meaningful contribution to the economic and social aspects within developing countries, and to preserve policy spaces necessary for ensuring access to knowledge, promoting public goals in the fields of health and culture, and a sustainable environment. In this context, they welcomed the continued discussions on the establishment of a "Development Agenda in the World Intellectual Property Organization" and reaffirmed the importance of the continuation of these discussions to ensure the effective incorporation of the development dimension in all its bodies.

41. They also reaffirmed the need to reach a solution for the problem raised by the granting of intellectual property rights on biological resources and/or associated traditional knowledge, without due compliance with relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In this regard, they highlighted with great appreciation the presentation in the WTO of the proposal co-sponsored, among others, by the three IBSA countries to amend the TRIPS Agreement by introducing a mandatory requirement for the disclosure of

origin of biological resources and/or associated traditional knowledge used in inventions for which applications for intellectual property rights are filed.

42. The Heads of State and Government noted with deep concern the increase in cases of misappropriation of biological resources through the granting of erroneous patents or the registration of irregular trademarks and, therefore, agreed on establishing an informal trilateral consultative mechanism for the exchange of information on these issues.

NDIA-BRAZIL-SOUTH AFRICA TRILATERAL COOPERATION

43. The Prime Minister of India, the President of Brazil and the President of South Africa reviewed initiatives for trilateral sectoral cooperation. South-South Cooperation is a key element for promoting economic and social development. In this context, the IBSA Dialogue Forum provides an invaluable framework to further trilateral cooperation among three of the most important developing countries in the world. The Heads of State and Government expressed deep satisfaction with new, concrete results achieved during the 1st IBSA Summit in the areas of Energy, Agriculture, Transportation, Trade, Science and Technology and Information Society. They decided to further explore additional opportunities for trilateral cooperation. In this regard, they took note and supported the launching of a Working Group on Public Administration.

TRADE

44. The Heads of State and Government expressed their deep satisfaction with the signing, during the 1st IBSA Summit, of the IBSA Action Plan on Trade Facilitation for Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment. They noted that the Action Plan, which is one element of broader goals on business facilitation, is an important element to create a concrete basis for the increase of trade flows between IBSA countries. They also reiterated the commitment to enhancing trilateral trade through the envisaged conclusion of bilateral customs cooperation agreements.

45. The Heads of State and Government expressed their full support and commitment to the expeditious establishment of the Working Group to focus on the modalities for the envisaged India-Mercosur-SACU Trilateral Free Trade Agreement (T-FTA). They expressed the view that the T-FTA will have a significant impact with regard to the consolidation of the IBSA Dialogue Forum as an effective mechanism to promote closer relations between India, Brazil and South Africa, as well as between their respective regions. They also registered that a growing cooperation between India, Mercosur and SACU in the trade field can strongly contribute to a new scenario in international trade, suitable to their respective development goals.

46. They reaffirmed, in parallel, the importance of ongoing India-Mercosur and Mercosur-SACU negotiations with a view to broadening and deepening existing Tariff Preference Agreements. They noted, as well, the forthcoming India-SACU tariff preference negotiations, and underscored that all these efforts are an important step towards the envisaged India-Mercosur-SACU Free Trade Agreement.

47. The three countries expressed their satisfaction with the fact that important business delegations from India, South Africa and Brazil took part in the 1st IBSA Summit Meeting. Leading businessmen from the three countries attended the "India, Brazil and South Africa Business Summit", organized by the Brazilian Confederation of National Industry (CNI) with the support of ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI from India, and BUSA, from South Africa. Furthermore, the Heads of State and Government held a meeting with business delegations from the three countries and had a fruitful exchange of views on perspectives and challenges for the expansion of trade among the IBSA countries.

ENERGY

48. The Heads of State and Government addressed the issue of the dual and linked challenge of meeting energy needs and achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development. They noted their satisfaction with the progress of the trilateral dialogue on energy cooperation, and expressed deep appreciation for the with the decision to create a Trilateral Task Force on Biofuels to work on concrete areas of common interest.

49. The Heads of State of India and South Africa praised the initiative launched by Brazil − the Biofuels Forum − to articulate and consolidate common objectives including the transformation of bioethanol into an energy commodity. They agreed on the need to work together to enhance and promote the use of ethanol and biodiesel as a vehicular fuel so as to increase energy security, while also bringing with it environmental, social and economic benefits.

AGRICULTURE

50. The Heads of State and Government reiterated the relevance of agriculture to the three countries and welcomed the meeting of IBSA Ministers of Agriculture on the margins of the FAO Conference in November 2005, in Rome, as well as the meeting of Senior Officials in January 2006, in New Delhi. They agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding on Trilateral Cooperation in Agriculture and Allied Fields, signed during the IBSA Summit, will be an important instrument to promote socio-economic development and South-South cooperation.

TRANSPORTATION

51. The Heads of State and Government welcomed the conclusion of the IBSA Maritime Transportation Agreement, which marks a new and tangible phase in the cooperation between relevant authorities and enterprises. They further noted with satisfaction that this agreement will create the framework for improving logistics, enhancing maritime skills base and fostering trilateral trade flows. They expressed the need for the relevant authorities in their respective countries to further identify other specific maritime related matters that can support major trade initiatives.

52. They also emphasized the importance of implementing the Memorandum of Understanding on Civil Aviation as soon as possible, through the establishment of regular air services linking India, Brazil and South Africa. They encouraged airlines from the three countries to continue working towards this goal. In addition, they shared the belief that further discussions regarding cooperation arrangements in other aviation-related areas would be of great advantage for their countries.

53. In this connection, they also emphasized the need for the authorities responsible for the transport sector to develop the Action Plan, with clear deliverables and timeframes, as a way of accelerating implementation of the commitments enshrined in the signed Agreements.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

54. The Heads of State and Government recalled the role of Science and Technology in shaping the future of societies in the three countries, particularly by providing tools for reducing poverty, promoting social inclusion and contributing to the attainment of the UN Millennium Development Goals. They noted with satisfaction the opportunities for scientific and technological cooperation between research and development institutions in the three countries, in areas such as health, biotechnology, nanosciences and oceanography. They noted with deep satisfaction as well the progress that has been made with the implementation of the 2005-2007 Work Program approved with the Rio Declaration on Science and Technology, signed during the 2nd Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Science and Technology, in June 2005. They reaffirmed their strong support and commitment to the goal of continuing to cooperate in these and other areas of common interest.

55. The Heads of State and Government also committed themselves to further enhancing trilateral cooperation in the field of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and to explore the possibilities of concluding a trilateral instrument for collaboration among all three countries for research and development of AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis diagnostic tools, drugs and vaccines. This would pool the significant capabilities that exist in the IBSA countries.

HEALTH

56. The Heads of State and Government welcomed the meeting of the Working Group on Health held in Brazil from 6-10 February 2006. At this meeting, the Working Group developed an IBSA Implementation Plan on Health focusing on public health laboratories, health surveillance, traditional medicine and sanitary control regulation. It also identified modalities to exchange experiences and explore solutions to meet health needs. In this regard, it was agreed that the Health Ministers will meet soon to adopt the Plan and to work together on global issues for achieving sustainable socio-economic development to end poverty, hunger and underdevelopment.

INFORMATION SOCIETY

57. The Prime Minister of India and the Presidents of Brazil and South Africa underscored the importance of working together towards a people-centered, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society and renewed their support for the results of the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), held in Geneva and Tunis, in 2003 and 2005, respectively. They agreed to continue to coordinate positions for the WSIS folllow-up mechanisms, as well as for the other fora and organizations related to the Information Society and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

58. The Heads of State and Government emphasized the need to promote and enhance close trilateral cooperation and capacity building between the three countries in the areas of digital inclusion, ICTs for development, as well as E-government and governance as a means of reducing the digital divide in their societies. They noted with satisfaction the progress made towards achieving this objective, particularly the signing of an IBSA Framework of Cooperation on Information Society, which provides the basis for future trilateral work aiming at reducing the digital divide in their societies.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

59. The Heads of State and Government welcomed the creation of the working group on Social Development. At its first meeting held in Rio de Janeiro, from 12-14 June 2006, the working group focused on the main challenges India, Brazil and South Africa will have to overcome in this area. It also identified new ways to exchange experiences and explore solutions to meet their social development needs. The IBSA Facility Fund for Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger will work in close relation with the working group on Social Development in order to identify new opportunities for South-South cooperation.

IBSA FACILITY FUND FOR ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY AND HUNGER

60. The Heads of State and Government emphasized the fact that the IBSA Facility Fund constitutes a pioneer and unique initiative of South-South cooperation. They took note of the accomplishments regarding the Fund and welcomed the renewed commitments of its Board of Directors to the achievement of its goals. They were also very supportive of the role of the UNDP South-South Cooperation Unit. They restated that the Fund is intended to make available best practices developed in IBSA countries to fight poverty and hunger, particularly to provide an IBSA contribution to South-South cooperation modalities.

61. In this regard, they expressed their satisfaction with the initiatives in Guinea- Bissau and Haiti and encouraged further work towards the identification of new projects, particularly the ones envisaged for Laos and Palestine. They underscored that the successful implementation of these initial projects, together with increased resources mobilization, are essential elements for the consolidation of the IBSA Trust Fund as a viable and efficient mechanism for South-South cooperation.

62. The Prime Minister of India and the Presidents of Brazil and South Africa underscored their countries' commitment to allocate at least US$ 1 million a year to the IBSA Facility Fund, a pledge highlighted in the Rio de Janeiro Ministerial CommuniquÃ©, released

on 30 March 2006, on the occasion of the 3rd Meeting of the Trilateral Commission of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. India, Brazil and South Africa will also engage in the search for other financing sources.

63. IBSA members encourage developing countries, particularly the Least Developing Countries, to submit projects to the IBSA Fund. India, Brazil and South Africa will continue to reach out to potential beneficiaries of the Fund.

64. The Heads of State and Government expressed their satisfaction with the decision by the Minister of State for External Affairs of India, H.E. Anand Sharma, the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, H.E. Celso Amorim, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, H.E. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, at the 3rd Meeting of the Trilateral Commission of the IBSA Dialogue Forum, held in Rio de Janeiro on 30 March 2006, to convene the 4th Meeting of the Trilateral Commission, to be hosted by India, in the first quarter of 2007. In addition, they considered the possibility of holding the 2nd Summit of the IBSA Dialogue Forum, in South Africa, on a date to be set through diplomatic channels.